

MAR 31 3 59 PM '03  
Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

March 28, 2003

The Honorable Michael K. Powell  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are writing you with respect to the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) on-going rulemaking on media ownership pursuant to the provisions of Section 202 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and Section 11 of the Communications Act of 1934. Our concerns are both procedural and substantive.

With respect to our procedural concerns, you have outlined a schedule for completing the biennial review that calls for the Commission to release its decision by June of this year. We respectfully request that the Commission adhere to this schedule. Permitting this important proceeding to slip into summer or fall will not make the issues involved any easier to resolve. It would, however, call into question the ability and willingness of the FCC to adhere to statutory deadlines clearly laid out in the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

In our view, the Commission's ownership restrictions are outdated. It is time for the Commission to amend all of its broadcast ownership rules and bring them into alignment with the realities of today's media marketplace. The public interest is in ensuring consumers a diverse source of local news, public affairs, and community interest programming. The extensive public record developed by the Commission underscores the perpetuation of outdated ownership rules in light of today's marketplace does not satisfy the requirements of the Telecommunications Act or the public interest.

The Commission has before it an extensive record that provides the factual underpinning for a decision that amends all of the rules to reflect the current marketplace. Therefore, we urge the Commission to conclude its media ownership proceeding and to reach a final decision on the fate of all its ownership rules by June of this year.

Sincerely yours,

  

The Honorable Michael K. Powell

March 28, 2003

Page 2

Rep Blumenthal Manzo Ch. Sitter  
John Sten Th. D. Feller John Eisinger  
Pete Sessions Rep. Patrick George Allen

cc: Commissioners Abernathy, Adelstein, Copps, and Martin